

Message Text

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TO USINT HAVANA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MILI, MASS, XA, CU, US

SUBJECT:TEXT OF NOON BRIEFING OF 3/7/78

Q. TOM, THERE IS A LARGE AD IN TODAY'S NEW YORK TIMES BY THE GROUP OF TEN WHICH RAISES THE QUESTION OF WHY THE UNITED STATES HAS NOT TAKEN ISSUE OF CUBAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES IN AFRICA TO THE U.N., CHARGING THAT THEY ARE A THREAT TO THE PEACE, AS HODDING CARTER SAID THEY WERE LAST NOVEMBER. DO YOU HAVE ANY ANSWER TO THE QUESTION RAISED IN THAT AD?

A. I DON'T HAVE ANY OFFICIAL POSITION ON THAT, REED, BUT LET ME SAY THAT WE THINK WE ARE RAISING IT. WE ARE RAISING IT DIRECTLY WITH THE CUBANS; WE ARE RAISING IT WITH THE RUSSIANS; WE ARE RAISING IT IN OUR DIPLOMATIC CONTACTS WITH ANY NUMBER OF PEOPLE, AND I ASSUME THAT WE HAVE NOT TAKEN IT TO THE U.N. BECAUSE WE THINK THAT IT IS BEST TO PROCEED IN THE FORUMS WHICH WE ARE PROCEEDING IN NOW.

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Q. DOES THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION BELIEVE IT WOULD BE SOMEWHAT EMBARRASSING FOR AMBASSADOR YOUNG HAVING STATED THE CUBANS WERE A STABILIZING INFLUENCE, NOW TODAY THAT THEY ARE NO LONGER STABILIZING?

A. I THINK AMBASSADOR YOUNG'S COMMENTS ON THE CUBAN PRESENCE IN THE HORN OF AFRICA SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES.

Q. IN OTHER WORDS, YOU THINK IT IS PERFECTLY CLEAR TO THEM THAT HE HAS CHANGED HIS MIND ON THE STABILIZING EFFECT OF THE CUBANS.

A. I CAN'T SPEAK FOR WHAT IS CLEAR IN THE MINDS OF THE CUBANS ABOUT WHAT AMBASSADOR YOUNG HAS TO SAY.

Q. WHY DON'T WE TAKE IT UP WITH THE U.N., THEN?

A. BECAUSE I ASSUME, AS I SAID A MOMENT AGO, THAT WE ARE TAKING IT UP IN WHAT WE THINK ARE THE BEST CHANNELS.

Q. IT'S NOT A GOOD CHANNEL, IN OTHER WORDS? IT'S MUCH BETTER TO DEAL WITH THE COUNTRIES INDIVIDUALLY THAN THE U.N.?

A. I GUESS IF WE HAVEN'T DONE IT THUS FAR, WE THINK IT'S BEST TO PROCEED IN THE WAY WE HAVE. WHAT WE WILL DO IN THE FUTURE, I JUST DON'T KNOW.

Q. IN THAT REGARD TOM, YOU SAY YOU'RE TALKING TO THE CUBANS, HAS ANY THOUGHT BEEN GIVEN TO ANY RETALIATORY MEASURES THAT WE MIGHT TAKE? FOR EXAMPLE, THE CUBANS, I UNDERSTAND, ARE LOOKING TO THE TOURIST TRAFFIC FROM THE UNITED STATES AS BEING A SUBSTANTIAL FOREIGN EXCHANGE

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EARNER FOR THEM. ARE WE THINKING ABOUT PERHAPS DOING ANYTHING TO CURTAIL THAT TYPE OF THING TO SHOW OUR DISPLEASURE?

A. WE HAVE SAID IN THE PAST THAT THE PRESENCE OF CUBAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES IN AFRICA HAS CALLED INTO QUESTION THE WHOLE NORMALIZATION PROCESS WITH CUBA, SOMETHING WE THINK THE CUBANS WOULD LIKE TO HAVE. BUT I'M NOT GOING TO GO INTO POSSIBLE FUTURE RETALIATORY STEPS WHICH WE MAY OR MAY NOT TAKE AS A RESULT OF CUBA'S AFRICA POLICY.

Q. THANK YOU, TOM.

(THE BRIEFING CONCLUDED AT 12:49 PM) VANCE

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